



Marion County
OREGON

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Marion County Kicks Off the Healthy Communities – Chronic Disease Project

After one year of planning, the Marion County Health Department in collaboration with the Chronic Disease Prevention Subcommittee of the Health Advisory Board will kick off the “Healthy Communities” – Chronic Disease Prevention Project at a meeting on Wednesday June 3 from 12-1:15 p.m. at the Fresh Start Market Conference Room, 3020 Center Street NE, Salem. The purpose of the kick off is to celebrate the end of the planning phase and mark the beginning of our work on the three-year community plan.

Background

In Oregon, two-thirds of all deaths are due to chronic disease and nearly 1.1 million people (70 percent of Oregonians) are living with at least one chronic disease. It is estimated that about the same percentage of Marion County residents also suffer from a chronic disease; however, residents of Marion County are significantly more likely to die from stroke and cancer than residents of Oregon as a whole. Furthermore, although many people think of chronic diseases as adult conditions, recent data suggests that one in three first graders will develop diabetes at some point in their lifetime, that is over 26,000 Marion County children.

To address this burden, the Marion County Health Department received a planning grant from the Oregon Public Health Division in 2008. The planning process involved establishing a community health advisory council (referred to as the Chronic Disease Prevention Subcommittee), completing a community assessment, and developing a three-year community plan.

“We have worked hard to develop a plan that focuses on ways to make the healthy choice the easy choice,” said MCHD Community Health Development Manager and Project Coordinator Tonya Johnson. “We are excited to start working to meet our objectives that that will reach populations as a whole rather than just individuals.”

The Healthy Communities Chronic Disease Prevention Project aims to reduce the burden of chronic disease in our community by putting systems and policies in place that: 1) increase opportunities for physical activity, 2) increase access to healthy food choices, 3) increase access to chronic disease self management programs, and 4) decrease access to tobacco.

If you would like to attend the kick off meeting or to learn more about the project, please contact Tonya Johnson at (503) 566-2901.

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